

2017 NATIONAL AWARDS, HELD ON SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER AND MY PERSONAL COMMENTS

The following was put on my FaceBook page re the 2017 National Awards and is sent to you for your consideration. Needless to say that my interest in seeing more films vanished, as I was not sure what was the true agenda of tfff. IGDS must also take note that their young graduates do not adopt similar disrespect to men, as critical partners in the development of women.

This was a most creative list of recipients, in my view, except for the Award for the Development of Women (gold). **Firstly**, to give such an award you must have the moral authority to have same. I hold to the truism that once is an honest mistake, twice denotes that you have such a habit and the third time it is your character. The statements by the head male here, supported by 3 women heads, including Gender Affairs, shows decisively that the development of women is not from their heart, far less Gender and Development.

When the Ministries were announced in 2015, the head was asked, where the Ministry of Gender Affairs is and he said NO COMMENT. An early indication of character, relevant to women concerns.

Secondly, to hand that award to a radical feminist, from early second wave feminism, still holding to the belief that to empower women you must disempower men, is telling all students seeking degrees in Gender and Development that we have not passed that stage, the crab in the barrel behaviour is acceptable.

To all and sundry, that has never worked and will never so do. As recently as last Friday, 22 September, at the HAYATT Regency, in Port of Spain, said recipient, lashed out at all the males in the audience of IGDS and TIFF's Women In Film day, of exposing men and women to the work of women and men in film, for men and women.

Her remarks were that in her view, this forum should be for women only, who can talk to men, theirs included, after. Needless to say, she shocked the women in the audience, who have pleasant relationships with men and unwelcomed the men there, some leaving before having lunch and some after.

In the recent past, my response to this Ministry was documented noting their gender insensitivity, in a request to help women in Shelters, to be shared later and my refusal to participate in an upcoming planned Violence Against Women March invited to, for the same reason of lack of moral authority.

Let me State here for the record, that I Donald Donat Berment will not be a part of any outreach in gender and development from this Ministry, the other Ministries who were vocal in support for the gender insensitive statements made by the Prime Minister, until all of them apologize to the women of our country and the men who love them.

As the Secretary and a Director of Men Against Violence Against Women (MAVAW), the most recognised NGO in the Caribbean and internationally, working in Trinidad and Tobago, towards reducing violence to women, my history and love of the Creator can withstand all challenges to this outreach.

Visit www.archive.org, search mavaw or Donald Berment in boxes, to get evidence of 3 decades of such work done in true philanthropic style, seeking no political awards but addressing the root causes of problems.

The Institute for Gender and Development Studies, IGDS and the Film Festival Committee tffilm, should state a disclaimer when their panelists could appear to be talking on their behalf, that the views of panelists, are their personal ones and not those of the host organisations.

Signed.....Donald D. Berment, Specialist HSD/NGA/DVC.

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